

# Preparation of Washington's Transportation Systems for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games

Transportation Planning Office  
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## Capital Investments Needed to Prepare the State's Transportation System for the Games—Unclogging Bottlenecks, Easing Congestion, and Improving Safety on Washington's Transportation Systems

Following are WSDOT projects that are providing smooth tourist and commercial travel across the border and making Washington State's transportation systems safe and reliable for all travelers.

### SR 543 – Interstate 5 to Canadian Border – Additional lanes for freight \$49m

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR543/I5\\_Canadian](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR543/I5_Canadian)

This project widened the highway from two to five lanes and built dedicated truck lanes to separate cars and trucks at the U.S./Canada border. Dedicated truck lanes allow the implementation of FAST in the northbound direction at this crossing. The project built a new interchange, eliminating a high accident location. This project was completed February 2008.

### SR 539 – Horton Road to Ten Mile Road widening \$66m

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR539/HortonTenMile](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR539/HortonTenMile)

### SR 539 – Ten Mile Road to Lynden widening \$101.6m

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR539/TenmileBorder](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR539/TenmileBorder)

These two projects widen the highway, providing an additional lane for traffic in each direction which helps ease congestion and improve safety between Bellingham and the Canadian border. Construction will be complete in fall of 2009.



New I-5 HOV.

### Interstate 5 – Everett, SR 526 to US 2 HOV lanes \$262.6m

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/HOVS526toUS2](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/I5/HOVS526toUS2)

This six-mile long project will increase traffic flow and improve safety by widening both directions of I-5 lanes to include a merging lane between 41st and US 2. A new interchange at 41st and ramp modifications to the Broadway Avenue ramp will also be constructed. Construction will be complete in September 2008.

### SR 9 – Nooksack Road vicinity to Cherry Street \$18m

[www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR9/NooksackToCherry](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR9/NooksackToCherry)

WSDOT dramatically changed and improved State Route 9 in Whatcom County between Lindsey Road near Nooksack and Cherry Street near the Sumas border crossing. WSDOT straightened, widened, and smoothed the highway to make it safer and more accessible year round. WSDOT removed three 90-degree turns from the highway and improved drainage beneath the road surface. Semi trucks can now move faster and safer along SR 9 on their way to and from the border. This project was completed one year ahead of schedule on November 22, 2006.

### Rail improvements

Since 1994, WSDOT has made track and signal improvements to the rail line so both freight trains and [Amtrak Cascades](#) passenger trains can operate efficiently within the shared rail corridor that stretches from the Columbia River to the Canadian border. Due to these rail improvements, Amtrak and WSDOT re-introduced passenger rail service between Seattle, Edmonds, Everett, Mount Vernon, Bellingham, and Vancouver, B.C., in 1995, and launched a second daily Amtrak Cascades round trip between Seattle and Bellingham in 1999. In 2008, WSDOT will be extending this train to Vancouver, B.C., giving Pacific Northwest travelers more transportation options along the I-5 corridor.



Amtrak Cascades.

## For More Information:

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**Traffic management including incident response and freeway and highway operations—responding quickly to traffic accidents or highway conditions ensures traveler throughput on the highway system**

### **Operations command post will coordinate traffic**

An operations command post will coordinate traffic management activities of WSDOT staff. WSDOT staff will optimize signal timing, control message signs, and provide incident response services on the I-5 Corridor and in Whatcom and Skagit counties as well as the border crossing at Whatcom County.



Incident Response.

**Winter operations including response to winter storms—ensures traveler mobility**

### **Additional personnel and equipment for increased services**

Highway maintenance will be ready with over 70 additional personnel stationed along the I-5 Corridor and border crossing routes. There will also be over 30 additional pieces of equipment at the ready. WSDOT may also have to provide increased snow and ice materials for the safety and convenience of Olympic travelers.



Snow plows and sand trucks.

**Traveler and tourism information—providing accurate real-time information about border wait times and road conditions at all four border crossings leading to Vancouver, BC will help to manage the 4,000-8,000 additional daily trips**

### **Real Time Traveler Information**

Real time information, which includes wait times and border conditions, allows travelers to make immediate informed decisions for both departure times and route choices. This information will be available via 511, the website ([www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/traffic/)), variable message signs, and highway advisory radios. In addition, WSDOT's website links to the [BCMOT website](#).



Real Time traffic reports on the web.



Washington State Ferries.

### **Washington State Ferries**

The [Ferries Division](#) is working with local chambers of commerce to develop travel packages that encourage travelers to the 2010 Olympics to visit ferry destinations in Washington State. Extending the Anacortes to Sidney run during the 2010 Olympics for traveler convenience is also under consideration.